

to claim 1, and because they define additional combinations of features not found in or suggested by the cited reference.

Specifically, Applicant has defined the stator electrodes as “protruding from a section of a stator wafer surface, wherein said section of said stator wafer surface is a substantially flat, continuous plane that is closest to said micro-mover, and wherein said one or more stator electrodes protrude from the same flat, continuous plane on said stator wafer surface.” Similarly, Applicant has defined the actuator electrodes as “protruding from a section of a micro-mover surface, wherein said section of said micro-mover surface is a substantially flat, continuous plane that is closest to said stator wafer and wherein said one or more actuator electrodes protrude from the same flat, continuous plane on said micro-mover surface.” Applicant respectfully submits that the claim language now describes an actuator that has stator/actuator electrodes protruding from a pre-existing flat surface, which is clearly distinguishable from the etched surfaces on the stator/armature in Narita. Furthermore, the stator electrodes of Narita are not protruding from a stator surface closest to the armature.

In addition, Applicant has limited the bumpers on each surface to a number that is **equal to, or smaller than**, the number of electrodes on the same surface. In Narita, if we consider the material between two neighboring grooves as a “bumper,” then the total number of bumpers would be **greater than** the electrodes on the same surface. Accordingly, the limitation on the number of bumpers relative to the number of electrodes on the same surface would further distinguish the instant invention from Narita.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, clearly distinguishes the instant invention from Narita. Accordingly, the grounds for the 35 U.S.C. §102(b)/103(a) rejections have been obviated and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

The amendment is supported by the specification, which describes, in pertinent part, that “...wherein the stator wafer 20 surface closest to the micro-mover 50 has upon it not only stator electrodes 80 but also a bumper 120 (page 7, lines 5-7)” and that “...the first bumper 120 on the surface of the stator wafer 20 closest to the micro-mover 50, and a second bumper 121 on the surface of the micro-mover 50 closest to the stator wafer 20” (page 7, lines 12-14). The section of substantially flat, continuous stator wafer or micro-mover surface is clearly shown in Figures 3-7.

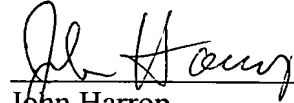
In view of the foregoing remarks, favorable reconsideration of all pending claims is requested. Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance and requests that a notice of allowance be issued. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is required to expedite the prosecution of this application or further clarify the issues,

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the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below. Applicant believes no additional fees are due. However, if any additional fees are due, please charge them to Deposit Account No.: 08-2025.

Attached hereto are a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment, a list of all pending claims, and a machine translation of Narita. The attached pages are captioned "Version with markings to show changes made," "Pending Claims," and JP1996051786A, respectively.

Respectfully submitted,



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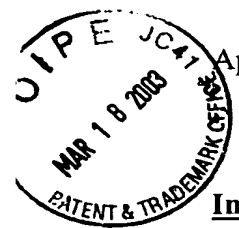
Dated: March 18, 2003

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Attachments: Version with markings to show changes made

Pending Claims

Machine translation of Japanese Patent No. 08-051786



VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 3, 6, 9, 10 and 11 have been canceled.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An actuator comprising:

a stator wafer;

a micro-mover above said stator wafer;

[a first] one or more stator electrodes protruding from a [first] section of a stator wafer surface [of the stator wafer] wherein said section of said stator wafer surface is a substantially flat, continuous plane that is closest to said micro-mover, and wherein said one or more stator electrodes protrude from the same flat, continuous plane on said stator wafer surface;

[a micro-mover above the first surface of the stator wafer;]

[a first] one or more actuator electrodes protruding from a [first] section of a micro-mover surface [of the micro-mover, wherein the first surface of the micro-mover and the first surface of the stator wafer face each other] wherein said section of said micro-mover surface is a substantially flat, continuous plane that is closest to said stator wafer, and wherein said one or more micro-mover electrodes protrude from the same flat, continuous plane on said micro-mover surface; and

[a first] one or more bumpers positioned [between the stator wafer and the micro-mover] on said stator wafer surface or said micro-mover surface or both surfaces, wherein the number of the bumpers on each surface is equal to, or smaller than, the number of electrodes on the same surface.

2. (Amended) The actuator of claim 1, wherein [the first] said one or more bumpers protrudes from [the first] said stator wafer surface [of the stator wafer].

3. (canceled)

4. (Amended) The actuator of claim 2, wherein [the first] said one or more bumpers protrudes from [the first] said stator wafer surface [of the stator wafer] at least twice as much as said one or more stator electrodes.

5. (Amended) The actuator of claim 1, wherein [the first] said one or more bumpers protrudes from [the first] said micro-mover surface [of the micro-mover].

6. (canceled).

7. (Amended) The actuator of claim 5, wherein [the first] said one or more bumpers protrudes from [the first]-said micro-mover wafer surface [of the micro-mover wafer] at least twice as far as [the first] said one or more actuator electrode.
8. (Amended) The actuator of claim 1, wherein [the first] said one or more bumpers comprises at least one of a metal and a dielectric.
9. (canceled).
10. (canceled).
11. (canceled).
- 21. (New) The actuator of claim 1, wherein one or more bumpers are positioned on both said stator wafer surface and said micro-mover surface.--